

New and Improved Consumer Guide to Long Term Care

Today's Marylanders Have More Choices

Maryland Health Care Commission News Release

Baltimore, MD (November 30, 2010) - Baby Boomers and people with disabilities increasingly have more choices about how they live their lives as they grow older or as their needs for assistance change. To reflect these new and exciting options, Maryland's [*Consumer Guide to Long Term Care*](#) has been redesigned to emphasize "aging in place" by remaining at home, in the community, or a transitional facility, but includes information about traditional nursing home care.

"The State of Maryland was a pioneer in public reporting on nursing home performance with the publication of the Nursing Home Guide in 2001," said Dr. Rex Cowdry, Executive Director of the Maryland Health Care Commission. "This new Guide continues that tradition."

From the 1960's to the 1980's, "aging in place" was replaced with aging elsewhere, mainly in nursing homes. During this time, homogenized families dissolved and dispersed geographically, women entered the workforce, and the traditional informal support system that allowed seniors to stay at home disintegrated, and was replaced by more institutionalized settings. However, since the 1980's, there has been a slow renewal of efforts to keep seniors and disabled individuals in their home or the community longer through the use of a myriad of community-based services. "We know from surveys that people prefer to receive services in their home or community rather than moving to an institutional setting," said Bruce Kozlowski, Director of the Commission's Center for Long Term and Community Based Care. The Guide emphasizes living at home or in the community by providing information on home modifications and community-based support services including Adult Day Care, Home Health, Meals on Wheels, Congregate Housing, and Hospice. There is also extensive information on Assisted Living Facilities, Continuing Care Retirement Communities, and Nursing Homes, plus a myriad of useful links to other websites. Where applicable there are federal and state quality measures, satisfaction survey results, as well as photos of assisted living, and nursing home facilities.

Users of the web-based [*Consumer Guide to Long Term Care*](#) will appreciate more comprehensive consumer information, and enhancements to the design that include:

- A facility search capability expanded to include locality, facility type, and services offered;
- A section on "Understanding, Planning, Preparing for, and Paying for Long Term Care";
- Information on home modifications to allow seniors and persons with disabilities remain in their home;
- Information on community support services including senior centers, meal programs, resources for family caregivers, transportation, and technology assistance;
- A resource section that includes links to federal, state, and local sites that assist in answering questions about long term care prescription drugs;
- Guidance on health insurance benefits, Medicare, and special transportation for persons with disabilities, and resources for family members or friends who help seniors and persons with disabilities;
- A "What's New" section featuring local news of importance to seniors and persons with disabilities; and,
- Improved navigation tools, such as drop down menus to select major information categories, pop-ups with definitions of terms, and easy to understand graphics.

Web Address: <http://mhcc.maryland.gov/consumerinfo/longtermcare>

Persons without internet access can contact Carol Christmyer at 410-764-3575 or toll free at 1-887-245-1762 for personal assistance.

For more information about [*Maryland's Consumer Guide to Long Term Care*](#), call

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